



The A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems Code of Conduct

I. PREFACE

The open exchange of ideas, freedom of thought and expression, and productive scientific debate are central to the mission of A.K. Rice Institute (“AKRI”). These require a diverse environment that is built on dignity and mutual respect for all participants and Institute staff members and is free of bias and intimidation.

Therefore, AKRI is dedicated to providing a safe, welcoming, and productive experience for everyone participating in Institute events and other activities, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, or military service status. AKRI shall not tolerate harassment of or by participants (including AKRI volunteers and AKRI staff) in any form. Participants in AKRI activities who violate this principle are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from membership

II. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Harassment is behavior that is hostile or offensive. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or written comments that are insulting, degrading, or threatening
- Verbal or written comments that are sexually graphic or sexually suggestive
- Unwelcome and targeted photography or recording
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Display of offensive or sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or graphics
- Initiation of inappropriate physical contact (contact of a violent or sexual nature)
- Unwelcome sexual attention, including repeated flirtations or advances
- Advocating for, encouraging, or intentionally concealing any of the above behavior

Harassment does not require intent to offend; harassment includes actions above that are intended to be jokes, “kidding”, or “teasing.”

Harassment does not include consensual personal and social relationships conducted in private spaces.

AKRI prohibits harassment against any person for any reason, but especially condemns discriminatory harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation,

disability, physical appearance, or military status. Sexual harassment is a specific type of discriminatory harassment.

III. EXPECTATIONS

All participants in AKRI events, AKRI forums, and other Institute activities are expected to treat other participants with professionalism and respect. Participants are expected to refrain from all harassing behavior to any individual. Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately, whether or not the request comes from someone in a position of authority.

Creation of a safe and welcoming environment is a shared responsibility held by all participants. Participants who believe they are witnessing or experiencing harassing behavior are encouraged, though not required, to ask the offender to stop his or her unwelcome behavior by referencing this policy. Often, this action alone will stop the problem. Participants are equally encouraged to exercise their option to leave a session or a situation that makes them feel targeted or unsafe.

If you believe you are the victim of harassment, regardless of how you otherwise choose to handle the situation, you are encouraged to report the situation to AKRI. It is possible that the behavior you witnessed is part of a larger pattern of repeated harassment. Please alert AKRI to behavior you feel to be harassment, regardless of the offender's identity or standing in the Institute.

IV. POLICY APPLICATION

This policy applies to all AKRI volunteer leaders, staff members, conference attendees (including speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and vendors) as well as E-list participants. This policy applies at all official AKRI events and other activities, such as conferences, training courses, business and committee meetings, and public speaking events. For in-person events, participants are expected to follow these rules at all event venues and event-related social activities. For remote activities, participants are expected to follow these rules in all non-physical spaces associated with the activity (for example teleconferences, group emails, and the AKRI E-list).

V. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall apply to enforcement of the AKRI Code of Conduct:

1. These procedures for enforcement shall apply only to alleged violations of the Code of Conduct occurring at Institute events or in connection with other Institute activities. The Institute shall undertake no enforcement action of its own with respect to other alleged violations, though criminal and civil law enforcement procedures may be available to complainants.
2. Any member of the Institute may bring a complaint to the Institute for violation of the Code by a member or a nonmember at Institute events or, in the case of a member's conduct, in connection with other Institute activities.

3. Complaints alleging violations of the Code of Conduct at an Institute event should be brought to the President or the Executive Director of the Institute at that event, if possible, and, in that case, need not be in writing. All other complaints requesting action by the Institute, including complaints relating to alleged violations at an event that are brought to the Institute after that event, must be in writing and directed to the President or the Executive Director.

4. Complaints brought to the Institute and alleging violations of the Code of Conduct shall be investigated by the President and/or the Executive Director, who shall refer appropriate complaints to the Board of Directors as provided for below. At an event, however, either the President or the Executive Director shall also have the authority, in his, her, or their absolute discretion, to take such action as may be appropriate to cause all violations at that event to cease, including expelling a violator from that event. All actions of the President or the Executive Director in enforcing the Code of Conduct shall be subject to a right of appeal, as provided herein.

5. The Board of Directors of the Institute is charged with resolving complaints of Code of Conduct violations and taking action with regard to alleged Code of Conduct violations.

6. Actions taken by the President or the Executive Director in response to violations and alleged violations of the Code of Conduct shall be reported by them in writing to the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days. That report shall also be provided, within that 30-day period, to the individual who is the subject of the complaint ("the Respondent"). The Respondent has the option to respond to the complaint by submitting a written submission to the President or the Executive Director within 30 days' of receiving the report. All such communications timely received by the President or the Executive Director shall be promptly forwarded by them to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall then consider the reports and communications received, conduct any additional investigation that it deems necessary and may take such actions as it deems appropriate in response, which may involve the temporary or permanent exclusion of individuals from the Institute's events and other activities, as well as suspension of membership rights or expulsion of members from the Institute, provided that all requirements of the Institute's Bylaws and other Institute procedures for suspension or expulsion of members have been met.

7. The Board of Directors may, but need not, conduct hearings in any matter referred to it provided that basic due process is afforded to anyone accused of Code of Conduct violations.